



The Poems of Jonathon Swift Volume two

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He lived simply, loved his walks and craved the company of fellow poetical wits as they craved his company in return. With his pal Dr. Sheridan, for one, Jonathan Swift delighted in the 18th century equivalent of a rap off – going back and forth in dueling verse repartee. This second volume is a cornucopia of biting, iconoclastic humor and earnest criticism of injustice. Poems herein concerning Wood’s Halfpence are the companion to his famous Drapier’s Letters and trumpet his achievement in stirring up sufficient outcry to spare Ireland from damaging monetary debasement. He knew what real money was: “For in all the leases that ever we hold We must pay our rent in good silver and gold, And not in brass tokens of such a base mould.” And he didn’t think much of monetary debasement’s evil twin, fractional reserve banking, either: “We want our money on the nail The Banker’s ruin’d if he pays”. There’s a healthy smattering here of bums and urination references too – just so you know these are genuine Swift poems -- and all manner of other topics too. In Death and Daphne, written for a favorite grisette, we learn of Death’s sagging libido due to the skinniness of his human bride. And the last poem excoriating Sheridan for comparing base women to noble clouds is a heavenly coup de grâce for any challenger who would dare to top his politically incorrect and thunderous wit:

*Some critic may object, perhaps,
That clouds are blamed for giving claps;
But what, alas! are claps ethereal,
Compared for mischief to venereal?*
- Summary by Arthur Krolman

Read by Arthur Krolman. Total running time: 9:53:33

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